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**Mentoring within the Minority Population:
How to Retain and Matriculate Minorities in a College Setting**

Brent Matthias Obleton

A Practicum Paper
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Master of Public Administration

Kennesaw State University

December 2011

Department of Political Science and International Affairs

Master of Public Administration Program

College of Humanities & Social Sciences

Kennesaw State University

Kennesaw, Georgia

Certificate of Approval

This is to certify that the Capstone Project of

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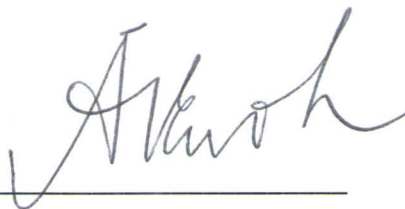
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Mentoring within the Minority Population: How to Retain and Matriculate Minorities in a College Setting

Executive Summary

In an ever-changing educational environment, it is pertinent that higher education institutions proactively implement strategies and programs that foster growth for the modern day college students. The establishment of effective support mechanisms is an essential component to aid in the development of students. Minority students, in particular, have shown a growing need to receive additional guidance outside of the traditional adherents (i.e., parents, personal ambition, educational advisors, etc). Historically, mentorship has been more prevalent in the private sector, used as a means to groom subordinates to take on new roles within their respective companies. However, assessment and the positive impact of such programs have led to an increasing number of emerging mentorship initiatives throughout the collegiate arena. Assessment of institutional operations and its impact, including applied strategies, programs and initiatives, is critical in gauging the level of funding received from the government.

This research is focused on assessing the attitudes, characteristics, and conversation topics of minorities as it pertains to mentorship. The study takes place at the third largest institution in the University System of Georgia, Kennesaw State University, during the Fall semester of 2011. A total of 95 minority students participated in the study by filling out a survey questionnaire. The data collected from the study indicated that minorities credit a large portion of their successful attainment of a college degree to their mentor/mentee relationship. Moreover, the research findings suggest that higher education institutions should strongly consider utilizing mentoring as a retention and matriculation improvement instrument.

Mentoring within the Minority population: How to Retain and Matriculate Minorities in a College Setting

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Mentoring within the Minority Population: How to Retain and Matriculate Minorities in a College Setting

Introduction

Mentoring is a subject matter that has in recent years gained a lot of attention amongst the business realm and more importantly the educational arena, specifically colleges and universities. The term mentor originated from Greek mythology, initially coming from “Homer’s Odyssey, in which a wise and learned man called Mentor was given the task of educating Odysseus’ son,” to guide him on the journey to maturity, nurturing him, serving as a trusted friend, and providing a model for what we now refer to as mentoring (Gudwin and Salazar-Wallace 2010, 3). Mentoring now is looked at as a life-saving tool for the next generation, especially within the minority population. With the influx of many social mediums such as Facebook, Twitter, and the rise of other social networks, face-to-face contact is a distant memory.

The notion that a person can properly develop into a healthy functioning human without proper direction is a very farfetched idea. With the increase in these social networks one would think that there is a decline in the percentage of the present day college student (millennials). “Going to college is no longer an elite privilege, but the norm. . .Today, 64 percent of young women and 60 percent of young men enroll in college after graduating from high school” (New Strategist Publications 2004, 45). Millennials are a group of young adults that thrive on achievement and making the most of what they have with the least effort. This attribute causes the vast majority to coin them as being lazy. Although this is the case, most parents of the millennials want their kids to do well in school. There are family characteristics that contribute to the success of the millennials. Findings reveal that children with educated, married parents whose families are well above the poverty level do far better in school than those whose parents

are poorly educated, single, and living below poverty level (New Strategist Publications 2004, 16).

Students of color or minorities (the term used in this study) amidst all the economic and social changes have gained a lot of attention as it pertains to retention, progression, and graduation in the higher education arena. There have been many initiatives and grants created to purposefully shed light on the need for minority students in higher education. The globalization of the world around us calls for a holistic outlook on many views, including education. Some education models assume that students of color come to college only with deficits (Rendón, Garcia and Person 2004, 4). With this in mind it is essential that these deficits are identified and strategies, programs, and initiatives to relieve them are implemented. “The linkage of mentoring extends to retaining students in an academic setting and encouraging them to graduate” (Joplin, Orman and Evans 2004). The purpose of this study is to determine if mentoring impacts retention and matriculation of minority students on a college campus.

The paper begins with an introduction, and it is followed by a review of the relevant literature. Immediately after the literature review are the methodology, findings and recommendations. The paper concludes that other institutions should make strides in testing mentorship as a retention and matriculation tool.

Literature Review

Characteristics of minorities and subgroups

The term minority, because of the construct of the word, has many connotations on what it represents. “Students of color” is a socially constructed (as opposed to biologically determined) term often used interchangeably and in place of the word “minority,” which

historically was employed to define groups that were less numerically represented in American society (Rendón, Garcia and Person 2004, 6). The meaning of socially constructed terms often changes because of the societal ebb and flows. When looking at the term minority, those examining the term must look through the biological lens and the social constructed lens. The socially constructed lens tends to be one in which society views the world and it causes there to be a stereotyping of the meaning of the term. “The term ‘students of color’ may be employed to identify students who are (a) members of racial/ethnic groups that have been historically underrepresented and undeserved in America’s educational system, and (b) socially defined as minorities who are most likely to become targets of oppression, prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination regardless of numerical status and distribution” (Rendón, Garcia and Person 2004, 7). With that in mind, one must gather that the term minority incorporates more than one variable and must have a historical foundation in order to have a valid and useful meaning. “While in most universities throughout the United States, the term ‘minority’ is an explicit reference to Afro-American students, there are regions such as the American West and Southwest where other oppressed minority groups such as Native Americans, Asian Americans and Chicanos are also considered minorities” (National Center for Education Statistics 2010).

African American

When individuals think of African Americans they generally think of them as the “minority” group that people refer to on a daily basis. To think this is to discredit the numerous groups within the United States. There has been such a historical focus on African Americans that a lot of the “resources” have been given to this ethnic group. In the United States African Americans comprise about 12 percent of the total population and represents the largest oppressed ethnic group in the country (Turner, Nora and Rendon 1996, 79). When looking at the African

American college student population, one must separate the African American male and African American female.

“The African American female students tend to do drastically better as it pertains to retention, progression, and graduation. African American women are the primary beneficiaries of and largely responsible for the gains made by African Americans in higher education in recent years” (LaVant, Anderson and Tiggs 2002, 43). This very reason causes the focus to be on the African American male, because of the dismal rates of retention and matriculation that African American males tend to exhibit. “The reasons for gender inequities are well chronicled in current research, with emphasis on the multiple challenges that African American men face in their endeavor to adjust and successfully matriculate through the traditional educational system” (LaVant, Anderson and Tiggs 2002, 43).

According to *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, there were approximately 2,584,500 African Americans enrolled in degree granting educational institutions in the year 2008 which comes out to about 13.5 percent (United States Department of Education 2010). Looking back historically, the rates of African Americans enrolled in colleges and universities in the 18-24 age range has increased; however, the African American male has continued to lag behind the African American female. Statistics such as these have captured the attention of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, and other organizations that provide grants alike. Organizations such as the Lumina Foundation have played an extensive role in providing resources for African American men to help them graduate from higher education institutions. “The Lumina Foundation’s goal is to increase the proportion of Americans with high-quality degrees and credentials to 60 percent by the year 2025” (Lumina Foundation 2011). In order to do this the Lumina Foundation has committed funds to the retention, progression, and graduation rates of African American males, specifically those within the University System of

Georgia. Table 1 presents the percentages of 18-24-year-olds enrolled in colleges and universities, by race/ethnicity and sex for selected years, 1980 to 2008. The statistics in Figure 1 further support the vast differences in the minority populations compared to that of the majority.

Figure 1: 18-24 years old enrolled in colleges and universities, by race/ethnicity and sex, 1980-2008

| Sex and year | Total ¹ | White | Black | Hispanic | Asian/Pacific Islander | American Indian/Alaska Native |
|---------------|--------------------|-------|-------|----------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Total | | | | | | |
| 1980 | 26.1 | 27.7 | 19.7 | 16.3 | — | — |
| 1985 | 27.9 | 30.1 | 19.8 | 17.0 | — | — |
| 1990 | 32.1 | 35.1 | 25.2 | 15.9 | 56.9 | 15.8 |
| 1995 | 34.3 | 37.9 | 27.5 | 20.7 | 54.6 | 27.6 |
| 2000 | 35.5 | 38.7 | 30.5 | 21.7 | 55.9 | 15.9 |
| 2005 | 38.9 | 42.8 | 33.1 | 24.8 | 60.5 | 27.8 |
| 2006 | 37.3 | 41.0 | 32.6 | 23.6 | 57.0 | 26.2 |
| 2007 | 38.8 | 42.6 | 33.1 | 26.6 | 56.1 | 24.7 |
| 2008 | 39.6 | 44.2 | 32.1 | 25.8 | 57.6 | 21.9 |
| Male | | | | | | |
| 1980 | 26.9 | 28.9 | 17.7 | 16.3 | — | — |
| 1985 | 28.4 | 30.8 | 20.3 | 15.1 | — | — |
| 1990 | 32.4 | 35.6 | 25.8 | 15.4 | 59.2 | 8.4 ! |
| 1995 | 33.1 | 37.0 | 26.0 | 18.7 | 55.7 | 27.4 ! |
| 2000 | 32.6 | 36.2 | 25.1 | 18.5 | 59.0 | 12.8 ! |
| 2005 | 35.3 | 39.4 | 28.2 | 20.7 | 62.0 | 25.7 |
| 2006 | 34.1 | 37.9 | 28.1 | 20.0 | 58.2 | 18.1 ! |
| 2007 | 35.5 | 39.6 | 32.2 | 20.7 | 56.5 | 11.8 ! |
| 2008 | 37.0 | 41.7 | 29.7 | 23.0 | 53.8 | 18.7 ! |
| Female | | | | | | |
| 1980 | 25.4 | 26.7 | 21.3 | 16.4 | — | — |
| 1985 | 27.4 | 29.3 | 19.3 | 19.0 | — | — |
| 1990 | 31.8 | 34.7 | 24.7 | 16.4 | 54.9 | 21.7 ! |
| 1995 | 35.5 | 38.8 | 28.7 | 23.0 | 53.7 | 27.8 ! |
| 2000 | 38.4 | 41.3 | 35.2 | 25.4 | 52.8 | 20.5 ! |
| 2005 | 42.5 | 46.1 | 37.6 | 29.5 | 59.0 | 29.5 |
| 2006 | 40.6 | 44.1 | 36.9 | 27.6 | 55.8 | 35.9 |
| 2007 | 42.1 | 45.7 | 34.0 | 33.0 | 55.7 | 34.5 |
| 2008 | 42.3 | 46.9 | 34.2 | 28.9 | 61.1 | 24.3 |

— Not available.

! Interpret data with caution.

¹ Total includes other race/ethnicity categories not separately shown.

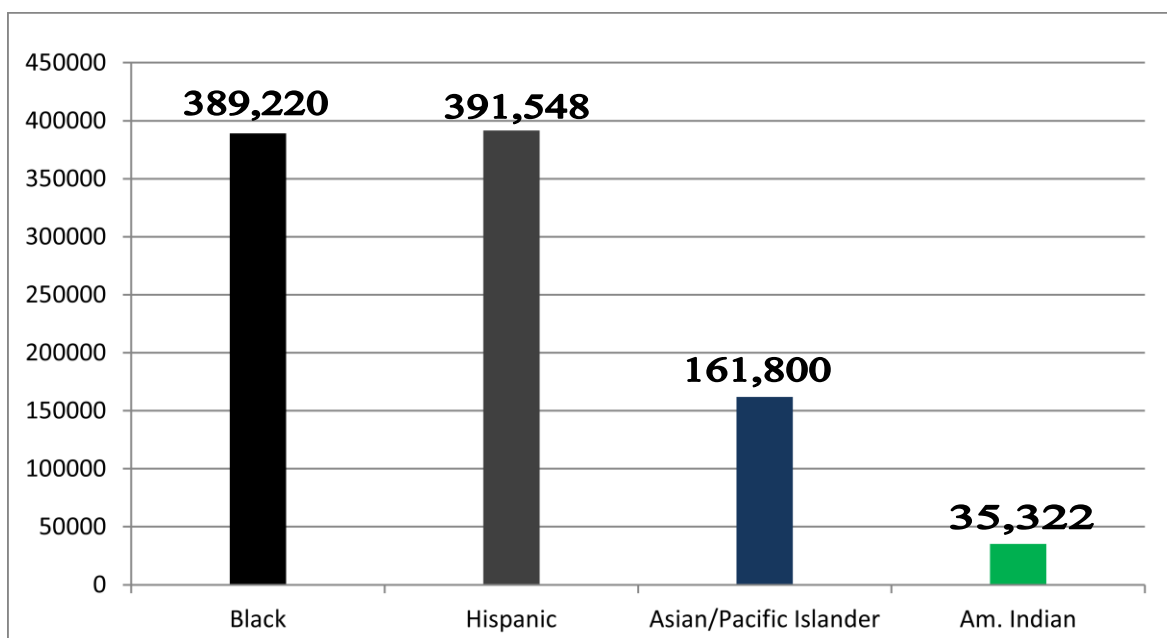
NOTE: Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), selected years, October 1980–2008.

Latino

The Latino population has grown at an exponential rate over the past 10 years, which has yielded an increase in Latino students enrolling and attending college and universities in the United States. Latinos are now considered the majority minority and it has caused a shift in not only focus, but resources. Leading all population groups in percentage growth since 1990, Latinos grew by 57.9 percent from 1990 to 2000 (Rendón, Garcia and Person 2004, 109) The Latino population along with the African American population must be looked at through different lenses. People most commonly hear the term Hispanic when referring to Spanish-speaking minorities in the United States. While the term “Hispanic” is the commonly used reference to these groups, it is more or less a catchall term embracing new immigrants and some families that have been living in what is now the southwestern United States for more than 300 years (Rendón, Garcia and Person 2004, 110). The Latino higher education performance can be contrasted to the projected growth of Hispanic high school graduates compared to other minority groups (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Projected Minority Graduates from U.S. Public High Schools, 2006-07.



Source: Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, 1998, p. 73. (Rendón, Garcia, and Person 2004, 110).

Latinos attending higher education institutions will play a huge role in the increasing minority population. In this new millennium, it is clear that successful institutions of higher education will be those that not only have acquired a deep understanding of the unique challenges and experiences of Latino college students but that also use that understanding in recruiting, retaining, and graduating these students” (Rendón, Garcia and Person 2004, 111).

Asian American

Asian American higher education students like the other minorities have the potential to have a rather difficult time transitioning. Many Asian Pacific American students encounter additional problems that are unique to their transition to college, including language and cultural differences (Rendón, Garcia and Person 2004, 124). One of the biggest factors in this group of students is the vastly different backgrounds that each student comes from and that include culture, values, and religion.

Native American/ American Indian

Historically society views the native population as a people group that had their land invaded and taken from their possession. With this mindset, a lot of American Indians have consistently resisted federal policies of assimilation, and have chosen to perpetuate their traditional ways of life (Rendón, Garcia and Person 2004, 137). One can gather that Native Americans have a sense of pride about their culture and would like to preserve that culture. Although this is the case, there are those out there that challenge the “our way” or no way approach that many Native Americans have towards education. In the Rendón, Garcia and Person text, “Duran and Duran challenge the mainstream theories of psychology and its practice, incorporating native approaches to healing, stating that “Without proper understanding of

history, those who practice in the disciplines of applied social science operate in a vacuum, thereby merely perpetuating this ongoing neocolonialism” (Rendón, Garcia and Person 2004, 138).

Mentorship of minorities

When reviewing some of the present literature it was shown that out of the millennial population, the present group of students in college, Asian women are the most educated which is at approximately 56 percent, and Hispanic men are the least educated with 19 percent (New Strategist Editors 2004). Interestingly enough minorities are at the top and the bottom of the educated college population. The focus on outreach through mentorship tends to be on struggling groups. In this case, it is the African American male and Latino male that are in need of the most mentoring and support.

Mentorship could play a vital role in providing the necessary support to this group of men, and it is a necessity for intervention to be embraced and implemented. An often quoted saying states that “It takes a village to raise a child.” This is very true and applicable to the African American male. Mychael Wynn states that “In the case of our sons (African American males), their academic and social development, school and personal success, exposure and opportunities, and maturation and spiritual development have been, and continue to be, the result of the village” (Wynn 1994, 8). Having support through mentorship is a pressing issue that many minorities speak about and desire. “The notion that someone thought of the student and their circumstance provided a much-needed linkage to society, and it increased the students’ motivation to do better” (Joplin, Orman and Evans 2004).

The present-day college students are now faced with a lot more responsibilities as it pertains to their day-to-day experience. It is the norm for most college students to work two to

three jobs while taking a full load of courses. This balancing act needs much attention and it calls for a focused posture if success is to be obtained. Most college students get so bogged down with their financial and educational responsibilities that they neglect other things such as career planning, and planning for their future holistically. A mentor could possibly play a significant role in guiding the student through this. According to LaVant, Anderson, and Tiggs (2002,44), “Jacobi states that whereas mentoring has been long associated with an apprentice model of graduate education, it is increasingly looked upon as a retention and enrichment strategy.” Assistance such as this has the capacity to help the mentee stay focused and ultimately stay the course on finishing up his or her degree. “Some African American male students enter college socially, educationally, and economically disadvantaged . . . by integrating them into the mainstream or social fabric of the institution (for example, student activities, minority leadership programs), their chances of persistence and matriculation are enhanced” (LaVant, Anderson and Tiggs 2002, 45).

Furthermore, there is an apparent need for research to be done on mentorship and progression/matriculation of minority students in college. The present literature speaks to the fact that mentorship could possibly add to the support that is already in place for assisting minority students. It is hopeful that the data collected in this research will give a strong foundation to the ever growing effort to help in the forward progression of educating minorities of the future. Colleges and universities alike will gain insight from this information being collected.

Methodology

The purpose of this research is to explore whether mentoring of minority students can help with their retention, progression, and graduation rates in a college setting. The term minority consists of individuals in racial groups that are historically underrepresented (such as

African American, Latino American, Asian American, and Native American). Through a paper-based survey, relevant questions were posed to see if mentorship impacts retention and matriculation of minority college students. The researcher is very confident that there can be a connection between mentorship and retention/matriculation. Although the various student groups come from differing backgrounds and have different factors that play a role in their development, it is believed that outside stimuli such as a mentor can aid in the success of a student while in college. With that in mind, a lot of colleges and universities are adopting mentorship to promote an effective contemporary linking of student affairs and academic affairs. Such a viable connection and working relationship is indeed essential to the holistic development of the student and I believe that not only Kennesaw State University, but also all higher education institutions would benefit from adopting a similar practice.

The research conducted took place in the Fall semester of 2011 at Kennesaw State University. The target sample size for this study is approximately 1 percent of the Fall 2010 minority student enrollment at Kennesaw State University, which is in total approximately 5,514 students (Kennesaw State University 2011). Respondents were selected through a purposive sampling technique. Kennesaw State University is the third largest institution in the University System of Georgia and serves as an ideal place to do this type of research because of its 32 percent minority population. There was a small test sample size that was used to determine if the questions were clear and concise enough so that the most reliable data can be gathered from the questionnaire. The unit of analysis within this study is presently enrolled students at Kennesaw State University that classify themselves as minority. The minimum age for this study is 18 years of age and participation was voluntary. To ensure that all parties involved in this study were kept anonymous only gender, age, and ethnicity were asked to ascertain to cover the demographics of

the participants in the study. The research data will hopefully display the impact of mentoring on retention and matriculation of minority students.

The limitation of this study is that its findings cannot be generalized to other institutions, because of the problem of external validity. This is because of the purposive nature of the sampling technique.

Findings

Mentoring is becoming a prevalent aspect of a successful individual. The invaluable service of mentoring has become a stable aspect of many institutions. Mentoring enables there to be an accountability factor in a student's educational endeavors, which causes the student to have a sense of obligation to the mentor. Many companies and organizations are implementing mentoring programs to help guide their new professionals in uncharted territory. A lot of dollars have been set aside to create and establish mentoring programs so that those that are rising in the educational and professional pursuits are adequately prepared. Research previously done has shown that mentoring aids in the retention and progression of college students. Minority students in particular benefit from having a mentor that aids them through their college years. That support system provides them with the guidance that is definitely needed especially at predominately white institutions (PWIs).

The study conducted focused on exploring if mentoring contributes to the retention and matriculation of minority students. This particular study assessed the attitudes toward mentoring that minority students have. Along with this, other characteristics were captured that also contribute to the mentoring equation such as the frequency and subject matter discussed when the mentor and mentee communicate. Minority students' involvement in mentoring programs can

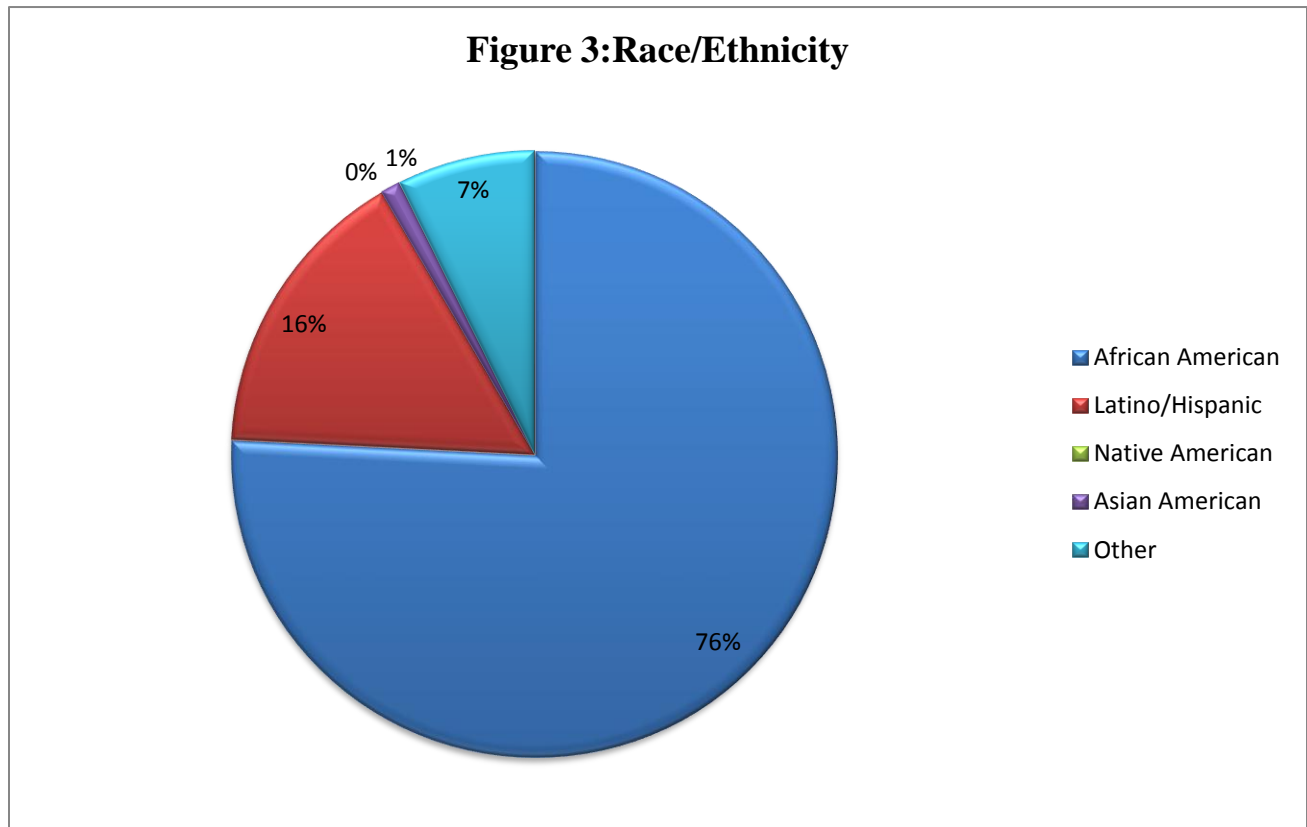
only support their academic endeavors. It is vitally important to keep in mind that mentoring is only a factor in retaining and progressing minority college students. Although this is the case, it is an essential element to giving minority students the most support as possible.

The study took place from October 7, 2011 to October 13, 2011 on the campus of Kennesaw State University, which is located in Kennesaw, Georgia. There were 95 survey's collected from the participants. The surveys were distributed randomly to the participants so that bias was kept at a minimum if not nonexistent. Of the 95 participants in the study, 53 were female (55.79 percent) and 42 (44.21 percent) were male. An overwhelming 84.21 percent of the participants were between the ages of 18-22 which is the traditional age range for college students. Approximately 11.58 percent of the students were between the ages of 23 and 27, 1.05 percent were between the ages of 28 and 32, and 3.16 percent fell into the 38+ age range (see Table 1).

Table 1: Gender and age distribution of study

| Gender Distribution | Count | Percentage |
|----------------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Male | 42 | 44.21% |
| Female | 53 | 55.79% |
| Total | 95 | 100% |
| | | |
| Age Distribution | Count | Percentage |
| 18-22 | 80 | 84.21% |
| 23-27 | 11 | 11.58% |
| 28-32 | 1 | 1.05% |
| 33-37 | 0 | 0.00% |
| 38+ | 3 | 3.16% |
| Total | 95 | 100% |

Along with gender and age other demographic information was collected, specifically race/ethnicity. Approximately 75.79 percent of the participants of the study were African American, 15.79 percent were Latino/Hispanic, 1.05 percent were Native American, and 7.37 percent identified themselves as other, in terms of ethnicity (see Figure 3).



Within in this study, a focus on minority student views towards mentoring was assessed. In question 3 of the survey, respondents were asked: Do you have a mentor? Only 33 percent of the participants stated that they had a mentor and 67 percent did not have a mentor. A couple of factors could possibly play a role in these responses. In a lot of cases, many people received advice, guidance, and support from people; however they do not consider them as mentors. When creating the assessment tool, the question was broadened to enable the participant interpret

how a mentor should be defined. Often time's people seek out mentors to assist them in their development, either in education or other areas.

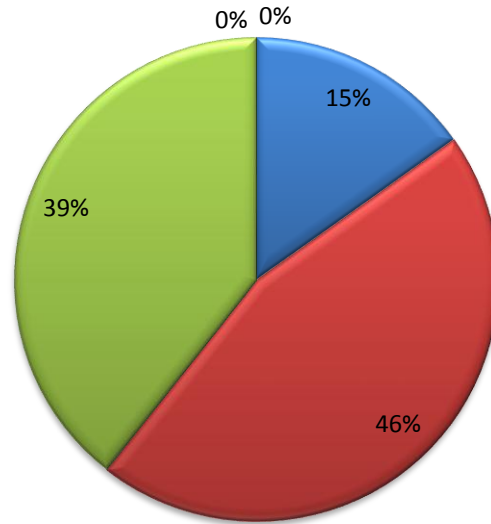
To explore the importance of being mentored, question 5 (in Appendix A) delved into how minority students view mentoring. Approximately 44.21 percent said that having a mentor is 'very important' to their success in college. Often times, in these cases, the students view their mentors as a life line to their collegiate success. Guidance in the areas of major selection, internship/coop selection, and post-graduation plans are all important to the mentor/mentee relationship. About 34.74 percent stated that that having a mentor was 'somewhat important' to their success. Moreover, 14.74 percent said it was important, 5.26 percent "not very important", and 1.05 percent said that it was not important. The overwhelmingly importance of mentoring based on the data collected supports the students' views that mentoring is an asset in their educational advancement. Having this view point is only half of the equation, because students must seek out a mentor if the person considers that a need.

More often than not those that have been mentored and/or are mentoring someone are more likely to mentor someone else; because of the support they have received. When asked: "Do you presently mentor someone?" approximately 25.26 percent stated that they presently mentor someone and 74.74 percent do not. This may be indicative of the fact that they have not been mentored themselves.

The remainder of the survey questions (questions 7-10, see Appendix B) only applied to the participants that presently have mentors. This was done to focus on the specific relationship that they have with their mentors. Figure 4 outlines the frequency of communication between themselves and their mentors.

Figure 4: How often do you speak to your mentor

■ Daily ■ Weekly ■ Monthly ■ About once a year ■ Never



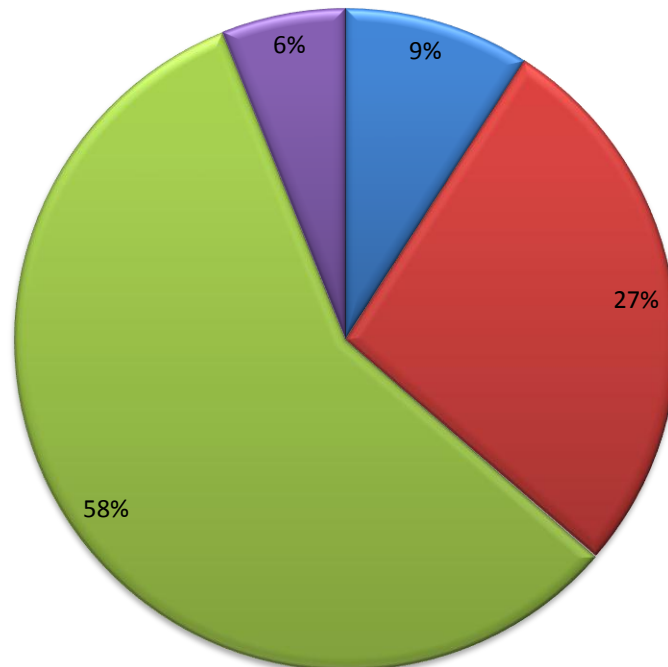
The frequency of the participants' communication with their mentors can be interpreted as the importance of their mentors in their lives. When looking at retention and progression, a very important aspect of seeing positive results is the frequency of support that students receive. Often times mentees view their mentors as a parental figure in their lives. Some mentor/mentee relationships may fill the void of a mother or father in the mentees lives. Time Elmore stated that "Sometimes, a mentee wants a second father and they become resentful when you fail to fulfill that need in their life" (Elmore 2009, 130).

Face to face contact is something like a forgotten art form in today's society and it inhibits people from gaining invaluable information because of the "business" of technology.

Social networks such as Facebook and Twitter give users immediate responses to their information wants. When asked about the frequency of their face to face contact with their mentors, their responses mirrored the culture in which they live in, which is a culture that prefers communicating through technology rather than face to face contact (see Figure 5).

Figure 5: How often do you meet face to face with your mentor?

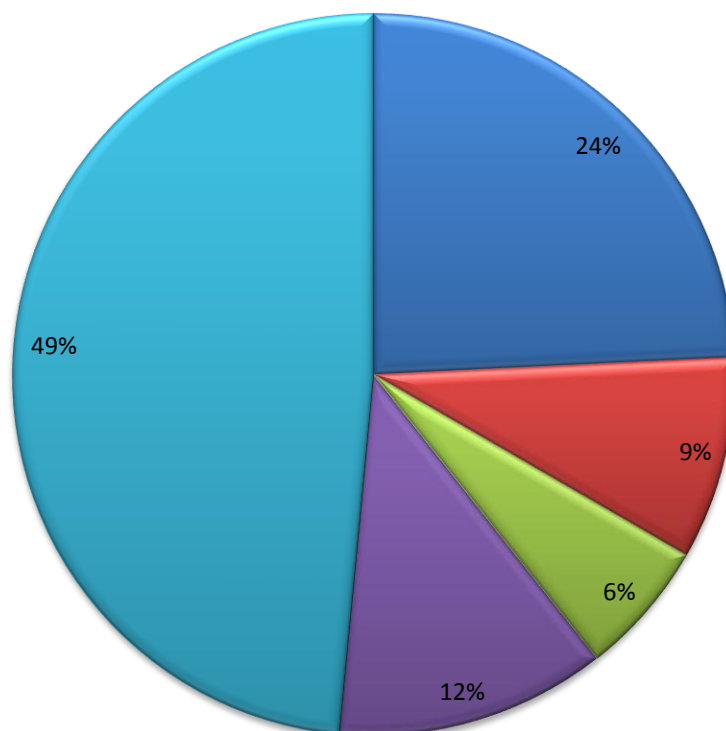
■ Daily ■ Weekly ■ Monthly ■ About once a year



The overwhelming response to what type of advice that participants in this study received from their mentors dealt with their education. Approximately 48.48 percent stated that along with their education, they spoke to their mentors about other things (see Figure 6 below).

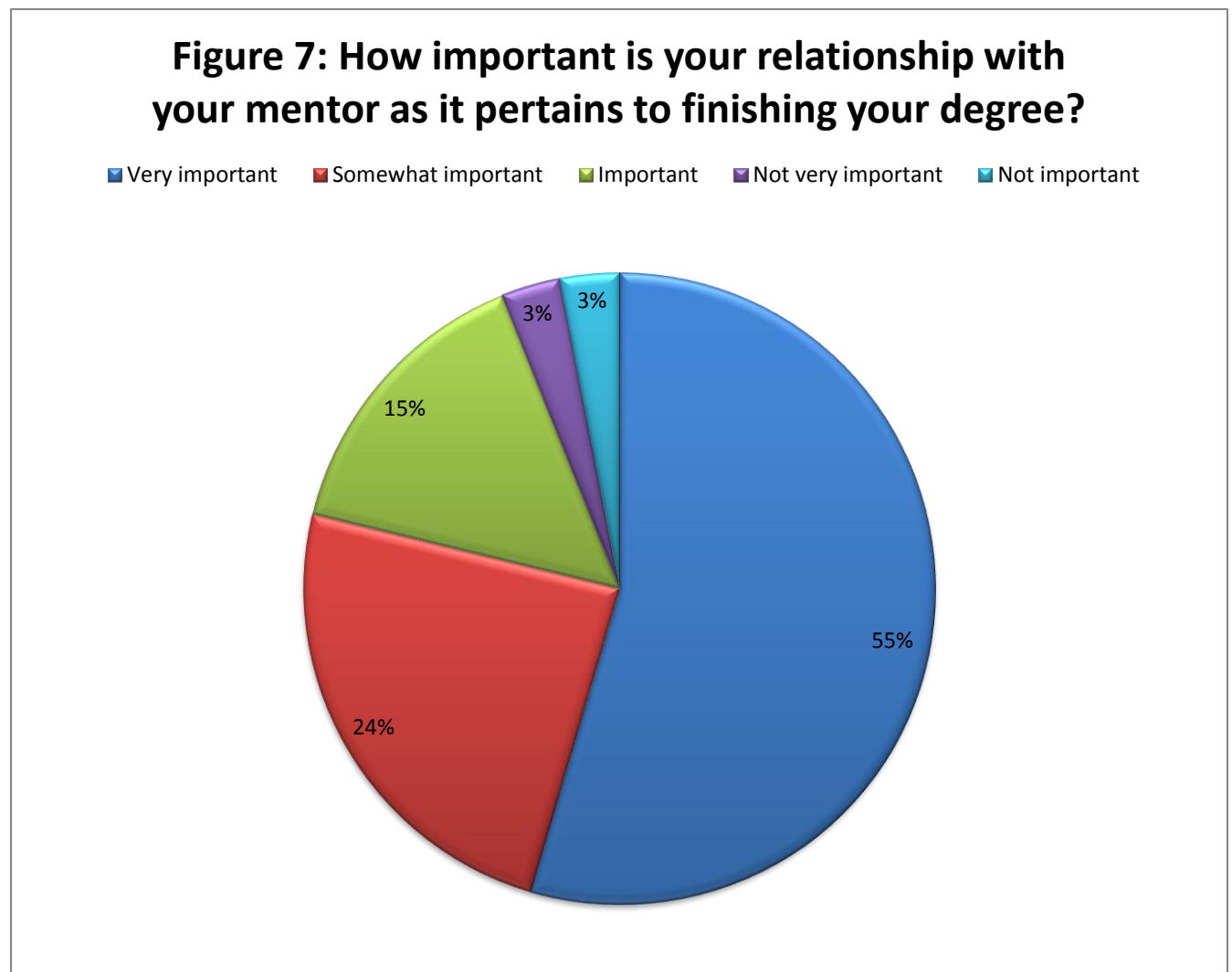
Figure 6: What advice do you tend to need from your mentor

■ Educational ■ Financial ■ Spiritual ■ Relational ■ Other (numerous topics, including educational)



Progression of college students often times indicates the support that they have received along the way. Higher education institutions are coming to the realization that students need support outside the classroom, if they hope to do well. Moreover, mentorship can play that role in that support. A lot of students depend on a support system to get over the things that they experience on an everyday basis in and outside the classroom. It is pertinent to keep in mind that

more and more college students are holding 1 to 3 jobs, so they can pay for their educational pursuits. Holding a job often takes away from students' focus, because of the students' quest in providing stability in their lives. Figure 7 outlines how the participants view their relationship with their mentors as it pertains to them finishing their degrees (i.e., progression).



Recommendations

Retention and progression of students in general is a pressing issue, however, it is more pressing for minority students. Through this study, mentorship has shown itself to be a very

important factor in a student's view of his or her success in staying in school and progressing towards graduation. Public administrators have a responsibility to uphold and implement four pillars that assist in serving the public and they are equity, efficiency, effectiveness, and economy. Equity as it pertains to public administration refers to the equal disseminating of resources amongst the individuals involved. Efficiency deals with how an organization uses its resources in the capacity in which it is most impactful. Economy entails an organization being able to accomplish results with the lowest output/cost possible and effectiveness looks at how successful an organization is in carrying out its mission and goals. Based on the findings of this study, higher education institutions can stand to retain and matriculate minorities through mentoring. Although the sample size was only 1 percent of the minority population at one institution (Kennesaw State University), the results still provide information that one can glean valuable recommendations from. Furthermore, the recommendations herein are based on the five pillars mentioned previously and the best practices that can be formulated from the data.

Higher education institutions should invest in establishing some type of mentoring initiative that aids in the support of minority students. Many funds are dedicated to students in general; however a focus must be on retaining and matriculating through their years in college. Economically, there should be a positive return on the investment of providing support as it pertains to the retention and matriculation of students, especially minority students through mentoring. By providing this service to their student body, minorities in particular, institutions have the means to add value to their support services already offered which could impact the effectiveness of the institution as a whole. Furthermore, it is of utmost importance that institutions track these relationships and record how they are impacting the participants of the program. Many institutions are focusing on the assessment that implementing a mentorship program would enable valuable information to be extracted as it pertains to support. Assessment

in the student affairs sector is becoming an important topic of focus, because of the efficiency of resources that institutions now have to hold in high regard. Resources are being cut in many areas and institutions throughout the country are looking at equitable ways to efficiently allocate their resources in order to receive the greatest return.

Regarding the attitudes and motives behind minority staying in school and moving towards the goal of graduation, their mentor/mentee relationship is very important in a large percentage. This factor is in line with previous research that has been done regarding the impacts of mentorship on retention and matriculation and this should encourage institutions to take a look at the possibility of mentoring becoming an addition to their support services. It is recommended that institutions should market this support arm to students as one of extreme importance. One may also provide data on those that have successfully finished their academic program, so that others can see the importance of having that support in place. Many students tend to go to college in a vacuum and do not expect to gain any support from any outside entities. In many cases, this misnomer causes the students to become isolated and have a mentality that students are alone in their academic journey. Most students have some type of internal motivation that drives them to even apply themselves in the classroom to further their education. However, in so many cases, it is those support systems outside of themselves that causes focus and stick-to-itiveness while being in college.

The current survey identified education as one of the focal points of conversation when the mentee discusses points of interest with their mentors. Education is becoming increasingly expensive and many students are unable to continue their education because of limited financial resources. Having a mentor to give advice in these types of cases could possibly keep a student in college. Due to this type of situation, a more seasoned professional could offer advice that

could effectively give an alternative to a student dropping out and in turn an institution retaining a student.

Overall, the researcher's overarching recommendation to institutions would be to develop and implement some mentoring programs for minority students. There should be some types of assessment in place to gather the data necessary to provide the fiscal support and to prove that this type of support arm is needed for minorities. In fact, mentoring can help an institution in its efforts of having a positive retention and matriculation rate.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the current research aims to assist higher education institutions in their efforts to retain and matriculate minorities. The current data in this research provide some acumen as it pertains to what can be done to further assist in supporting these efforts. The findings in this study are very similar to previous research on the retention and matriculation of minority through mentorship initiatives. Overall, this study indicates that mentorship is very important to minority students. Moreover, minority students in large part attribute their success and ultimate matriculation through college to the support received from their perspective mentors. The conversations that happen between the mentor and mentee in this study lean towards an education focus, in which one can conclude that the relationship is built heavily on educational advice and support. Regarding the frequency of conversation with their mentors, minorities tend to talk more on a monthly basis, rather than a weekly or even daily basis as shown in previous research. The frequency of conversations tends to play a role in the strength of the mentor/mentee relationship, which could shape how strong of a support system a minority student might have. Some other differences in this research findings and previous research are what type of contact mentors/mentees have with each other. Today's generation prefer

communicating via text and e-mail rather than face to face. This has changed gradually over the years because of the ease of access of instant communication (i.e., Text and e-mail), rather than contact in person.

The recommendations in this study include how higher education institutions can retain and matriculate minority students. The foremost recommendation is to get institutional buy in as it pertains to mentorship and actively engaging minority students in this endeavor. Doing this, will allow institutions to position themselves to provide services that assist in the retention and matriculation of their student body successfully. To carry this out, it is necessary for institutions to allocate resources to fulfill this need, such as fiscal resources and personnel to carry this task out.

An additional, in-depth research is required because the graduation rates of minorities are lacking behind that of the majority. Moreover, future studies should explore mentoring as a stable core value of their academic programs. This could develop into a preventive strategy as it pertains to minority attrition rates. Although this study was limited to data obtained from one institution, the data can be used to help other institutions make strides in testing mentorship as a retention and matriculation tool.

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Appendix A

Research Consent Form

I agree to participate in the research project entitled **Mentoring within the Minority population: How to retain and matriculate minorities within a college setting**, which is being conducted by **Brent M. Obleton, 1000 Chastain Road, Kennesaw, GA 30144; Ph.:678-797-2575**. I understand that this participation is absolutely voluntary; I can withdraw my consent at any time without question.

The following have been explained to me:

1. The purpose of this research is to better understand how minority students can be assisted in the retention and matriculation while in college.
2. There are no known benefits expected to participants from this research.
3. The procedures are as follows: The participant will sign the consent form and receive a survey questionnaire and pen. After completion of the survey the participants will return the completed survey to the researcher. The completed survey will then be enclosed in a lock box.
4. There are no known discomforts that may be faced during this data collection.
5. Participants know that there are no known physical, psychological, social, or legal risks.
6. The results of this participation will be anonymous in nature and once the data are collected and analyzed, the surveys will be disposed of in the Iron Mountain bin for safe and thorough disposal.
7. Participation in this survey is expected to take no more than 10 minutes.
8. You must be 18 years of age or older to take part in this study.

Initials of Investigator, Date

Initials of Participant , Date

PLEASE SIGN BOTH COPIES, KEEP ONE AND RETURN THE OTHER TO THE INVESTIGATOR

Research at Kennesaw State University that involves human participants is carried out under the oversight of an Institutional Review Board. Questions or problems regarding these activities should be addressed to the Institutional Review Board, Kennesaw State University, 1000 Chastain Road, #0112, Kennesaw, GA 30144-5591, (678) 797-2268.

Appendix B

SURVEY

Mentoring within the Minority population: How to retain and matriculate minorities within a college setting

Directions: Please answer each question by circling the applicable response.

1) What is your gender?

(a) Male

(b) Female

2) What is your age?

(a) 18-22

(b) 23-27

(c) 28-32

(d) 33-37

(e) 38+

3) What is your race/ethnicity

(a) African American (b) Latino/Hispanic (c) Native American (d) Asian American (e) Other

4) Do you have a mentor

(a) Yes

(b) No

5) Do you think that having a mentor is important to your success in college?

a) Very important

b) Somewhat important

c) Important

d) Not very important

e) Not important

6) Do you presently mentor someone?

a) Yes

b) No

7) How often do you speak to your mentor?

a) Daily

b) Weekly

c) Monthly

- d) About once a year
 - e) Never
- 8) How often do you meet face to face with your mentor?
- a) Daily
 - b) Weekly
 - c) Monthly
 - d) About once a year
- 9) What advice do you tend to need from your mentor?
- a) Educational
 - b) Financial
 - c) Spiritual
 - d) Relational
 - e) Other
- 10) How important is your relationship with your mentor as it pertains to finishing your degree?
- a) Very important
 - b) Somewhat important
 - c) Important
 - d) Not very important
 - e) Not important

Appendix C

| Survey Results | | |
|--|--------|---------|
| <i>Mentoring within the minority population: How to retain and matriculate minorities within the college setting</i> | | |
| Survey Questions | Counts | % |
| Question 1: What is your gender? | | |
| (a) Male | 42 | 44.21% |
| (b) Female | 53 | 55.79% |
| Total | 95 | 100.00% |
| | | |
| Question 2: What is your age? | | |
| (a) 18-22 | 80 | 84.21% |
| (b) 23-27 | 11 | 11.58% |
| (c) 28-32 | 1 | 1.05% |
| (d) 33-37 | 0 | 0.00% |
| (e) 38+ | 3 | 3.16% |
| Total | 95 | 100.00% |
| | | |
| Question 3: What is your race/ethnicity? | | |
| (a) African American | 72 | 75.79% |
| (b) Latino/Hispanic | 15 | 15.79% |
| (c) Native American | 0 | 0.00% |
| (d) Asian American | 1 | 1.05% |
| (e) Other | 7 | 7.37% |
| Total | 95 | 100.00% |
| | | |
| Question 4: Do you have a mentor? | | |
| (a) Yes | 33 | 34.74% |
| (b) No | 62 | 65.26% |
| Total | 95 | 100.00% |
| | | |

| | | |
|---|----|---------|
| Question 5: Do you think that having a mentor is important to your success in college? | | |
| a) Very important | 42 | 44.21% |
| b) Somewhat important | 33 | 34.74% |
| c) Important | 14 | 14.74% |
| d) Not very important | 5 | 5.26% |
| e) Not important | 1 | 1.05% |
| Total | 95 | 100.00% |
| Question 6: Do you presently mentor someone? | | |
| a) Yes | 24 | 25.26% |
| b) No | 71 | 74.74% |
| Total | 95 | 100.00% |
| Question 7: How often do you speak to your mentor? | | |
| a) Daily | 5 | 15.15% |
| b) Weekly | 15 | 45.45% |
| c) Monthly | 13 | 39.39% |
| d) About once a year | 0 | 0.00% |
| e) Never | 0 | 0.00% |
| Total | 33 | 100.00% |
| Question 8: How often do you meet face to face with your mentor? | | |
| a) Daily | 3 | 9.09% |
| b) Weekly | 9 | 27.27% |
| c) Monthly | 19 | 57.58% |
| d) About once a year | 2 | 6.06% |
| Total | 33 | 100.00% |
| Question 9: What advice do you tend to need from your mentor? | | |
| a) Educational | 8 | 24.24% |
| b) Financial | 3 | 9.09% |
| c) Spiritual | 2 | 6.06% |
| d) Relational | 4 | 12.12% |
| e) Other | 16 | 48.48% |
| Total | 33 | 100.00% |

| | | |
|--|----|---------|
| | | |
| Question 10: How important is your relationship with your mentor as it pertains to finishing your degree? | | |
| a) Very important | 18 | 54.55% |
| b) Somewhat important | 8 | 24.24% |
| c) Important | 5 | 15.15% |
| d) Not very important | 1 | 3.03% |
| e) Not important | 1 | 3.03% |
| Total | 33 | 100.00% |